



2020 4Q Education: Lesson 1 Education in the Garden of Eden

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Received this email this week:

Thanks very much for what you guys do – I'm fairly new to Come and Reason and took my time listening to lectures and the Bible studies before 'buying in'. 😊 I'm very thankful that Dr. Jennings has been able to articulate the 'penal legal theory' in a way that has resonated with so many people. It is one of those concepts in Christianity that I grew up believing was wrong, but could never really define it or see the bigger picture associated with it. It's also funny because I'm in my late 40s and have recently gotten into Law school, and yes the Socialist/Marxist ideas hinted at in lesson studies are alive and well in Canadian Universities as well.

Thank you again for all you do. I enjoy the podcasts when I have some spare time to clean up in the shop (remnants of summer projects), or when I get to prepare to lead out in our local Sabbath School Lesson study (I too have difficulty making it past 'Sunday').

We are starting a new quarter on Education—what is the purpose of education?

- To learn
- To develop

But for what purpose are we to learn and develop?

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10 NIV84)

Read the first paragraph in the introduction: “Think about the above text...” This is so well said, so what is the purpose of education? To learn and develop to become wise, which means....we come to know the truth about God and His kingdom, methods, principles...which means....we grow to be more and more like Him—to develop Christlike character!

Are there laws involved in this process? What laws?

- Worship—by beholding we are changed
- Exertion—strength comes from exercise
- Truth—truth destroys lies and ennobles and develops the person
- Love—we live out the principles of love in how we treat others as we grow in our love and appreciation for God



I want to read to you the first paragraph of the book *Education*:

Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. [What does this mean? Reading, writing, arithmetic, academic learning, vocations, degrees, scholastics—this is the lower education, the narrow education, focused on things, facts, fields of study—but not the larger reality of God’s kingdom, who we are, the war, God’s methods and purposes. One can get advanced degrees in this world and still be most ignorant of reality. Think of all those scientists who teach there is no God.] There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. **It means more than a preparation for the life that now is.** [What does this mean? That our education is first and foremost for our lives in God’s kingdom, not the kingdoms of this world.] **It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man.** [The whole being—is that more than cognitive? Is it more than physical? What is the whole period of existence possible to us? Eternity—what is the focus of education for eternity?] **It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers.** It prepares the student for **the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.** Ed 13.1

What is the difference between mental and spiritual powers?

What is the spirit of a human—we are not speaking about a vapor that floats around—but what is the spirit of a man? Is it attitude—"he’s got good spirit?" Is it heart affection, "I’ll be with you in spirit?"

Is it that part of humanity that is sensitive and responsive to God?

What are spiritual powers versus mental powers and how to we develop them?

My view is that the spiritual powers are those powers we get from being connected with God. Mental powers are abilities or capacities God created us with that we can still exercise while in rebellion against God, but the spiritual powers can only grow to the degree God is working in us.

Spiritual powers include:

- Love—the process of compassion, altruism, empathy—to the degree a person loves with genuine love for others it is an evidence of God working in their life.
- Truth bearing—the ability to know, live, and share real truth—the truth of God’s kingdom and reality.
- Living Faith—not the mere capacity to have faith, but the functional faith in God that results in ability to stand in the face of opposition, to trust God with outcomes and do what is right when pressure is applied not to. Like the three worthies on the plain of Dura.
- Hope—genuine hope comes from knowing God and the eternal realities of His kingdom. There is a futile earthly hope—in which we hope for things or earthly results, but all such hope fails in the end and leaves us hopeless. This earthly hope would be similar to the counterfeits to love, when we love things or people for what they do for us rather than love God or love the people for who they are.



- Discernment—the ability to differentiate good and evil
- Wisdom—the ability to apply truth and knowledge in harmony with God’s principles for the outworking of God’s purposes
- Knowing God’s methods—how reality works—God’s methods are foolishness to the world. In the world the more you take and hoard the more you have. In God’s kingdom the more you give the more you have.
- Conscientiousness/conscience—the closer we come to God the more sensitive our conscience becomes. Things of the world become offensive and we rejoice in the good. We are quick to realize when something is off. The more we develop this power the more sensitive we are to deviations from God’s design laws.
- Others?

Mental powers include:

- Reasoning ability
- Scholastic ability
- Knowing people and things
- Memory
- Problem solving skills
- Strategic thinking
- Concentration/attention/focus
- Situational awareness
- Psychological mindedness (ability for introspection)
- Abstract thinking ability

How do we develop the spiritual powers? By experience and exercise.

- First and foremost is being loved—healthy nurturing, loving environment develops in the infant and child the spiritual ability to love.
- Parental reliability, predictability, keeping one’s word with the child develops the child’s ability to trust. Trust is further developed in situations of distress and deliverance.
- Teaching children reality by both didactics and experience—application of the lesson in reality, develops discernment.

Then, as with all powers, we must exercise—if we want more love we must love more. We must spend time in communion with God, the source of love, but then share what God has revealed and given to us with others.

In researching for class I came this quote:

The humble worker who obediently responds to the call of God may be sure of receiving divine assistance. **[What is described in this sentence? God calls, we humbly exercise our freedom to choose to say yes, and when we do we receive divine assistance. We are not left to our own power.] To accept so great and holy a responsibility is itself elevating to the character. [Why? What is described? The act of choosing changes us, either aligning**



ourselves with God and His kingdom or alienating us. Every choice to follow God is healing to us.] **It calls into action the highest mental and spiritual powers, and strengthens and purifies the mind and heart.** Through faith in the power of God, it is wonderful how strong a weak man may become, how decided his efforts, how prolific of great results. **He who begins with a little knowledge, in a humble way, and tells what he knows, while seeking diligently for further knowledge, will find the whole heavenly treasure awaiting his demand. The more he seeks to impart light, the more light he will receive.** [What laws are described? Both the law of exertion and the law of love, the more you give the more you receive.] **The more one tries to explain the word of God to others, with a love for souls, the plainer it becomes to himself.** [Notice the caveat—with a love for souls. If one tries to explain it without love, one is a Pharisee, outside of God's kingdom—many theologians through history have become educated academically but still are ignorant of the kingdom of God. It is when we have love for others in the heart that we are connected with God and His Spirit is there to direct and enlighten our minds.] **The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have.** COL 354.1 [Again the law of exertion.]

Every effort made for Christ will react in blessing upon ourselves. If we use our means for His glory, He will give us more. As we seek to win others to Christ, bearing the burden of souls in our prayers, our own hearts will throb with the quickening influence of God's grace; our own affections will glow with more divine fervor; our whole Christian life will be more of a reality, more earnest, more prayerful. COL 354.2

How can we strengthen our spiritual powers? By exercise, by applying whatever truth we currently know. By diligently seeking to add to our current understand and practice more of God's methods and principles, by sharing what God has done for us with others.

But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:14 NIV84)

Spiritual powers cannot function without the mental powers or physical powers, but both the mental and physical can function without the spiritual.

- Evil people who reject God (and Satan and his demons) can reason, strategize, memorize, learn to facts, gain new skills and abilities both mental and physical—the mental and physical abilities can operate without developing the spiritual
- But one cannot know truth, love, hope, be conscientious, having living faith, discern, have genuine wisdom without mental abilities, without a physical body. And to the degree our physical health is undermined all of our spiritual abilities are undermined—even if we have a heart desire to act, if we are physically sick, we are limited in spiritual power.

So, Satan seeks to destroy by:

- Infecting our thinking with lies about God, which undermine the development of spiritual powers, we don't really trust, but make up theologies to keep us hidden or protected from God.



This impairs our unity with God, it impairs our ability to grow in love, it impairs our hope, it keeps fear alive. It makes us spiritual weaklings.

- Getting us to overtax ourselves either mentally or physically to the point of burnout—i.e. we don't rest and recover
- Getting us to live in violations of the laws of health which undermines our spiritual powers.
- Undermining healthy education so we don't develop our mental powers in godly lines, but in godless lines, thus dwarfing our spiritual powers—this is what public education does.

Destructive factors cause contradictions and work against God's design laws:

- a caregiver, parent, teacher, pastor who claims to love but exploits
- a caregiver, parent, teacher, pastor who claims to love but is inconsistent, doesn't keep boundaries, thus can't be trusted
- a person in a role of authority teaching things that are contradictory to reality—made up rules and threats of punishment under the guise of love
- failure to live in harmony with the laws of health—thus toxins, poor diet, no physical exercise
- believing that faith means believing what doesn't make sense or believing without evidence—thus no exercise of one's reasoning abilities
- believing lies about God and God's laws that lead to fear-based religions

Do our spiritual powers operate independently of our mental and physical powers? No!

If we neglect or injure one domain will it impact the other domains?

Healthy education starts in the home with a healthy environment that provides good nutrition, sleep, fresh air, but also healthy love, touch, affection, healthy boundaries, and as the child is able they are engaged in discussion, explanation leading them to understand the world God created, ultimately connecting these lessons back to a knowledge and experience with God. Thus, it includes teaching them the Bible and all reality through the lens of Bible truth.

Read second paragraph, "The system of education..." What are the principles of education you gain from considering Eden?

- Daily communing with God
- Learning from reality—from nature, how reality actually works, which teaches what kind of law? Were there any keep off the grass signs in Eden?
- Learning from examination, study, evidence and experience. God brought the animals to Adam and Adam evaluated them and gave them names appropriate to their kind.
- Learning from doing—God had Adam and Eve tend the garden, put their abilities to use, to act, evaluate and assess, and learn.
- Learning through relationships—Adam and Eve conversed with angels and shared experiences with each other

If we want to damage true education we would interfere with these elements or principles. We would:



- Remove or replace God with a false god, no god, or a human mediator in God's place—and look at what happened to humanity when the Roman church replaced God with both a false god and human mediators, and later when society rejected God altogether.
 - On our Facebook page we frequently get people posting critical comments about those who believe in God. Claiming that the Bible and Christianity support slavery or murder or war or other abuses. What these comments reveal is how deeply the lie that God's law being imposed has infected the world.
- We would replace design law and how reality works with man-made law and legal requirements and restrictions—
 - This leads to all kinds of inconsistencies, loopholes, abuses, extortions, taxes, domination, ever increasing fear and damages the reasoning powers. People become legal, rigid, rules-oriented, irrational to reality applying rules because the rules say so. We see this so much right now with how COVID is being handled so differently in different jurisdictions. So, it destroys discernment and wisdom, love, faith and hope.
- We would replace actual examination of reality with textbooks filled with claims, proclamations, lists, theories—whether religious dogmas or creeds or godless theories of origins, or claims there is no male or female, all that contradict reality and thus requires the denial of evidence
 - This leads to increasing intolerance of those who don't see it the socially correct way. We have less willingness to intelligently discuss, explore, examine, and greater use of power over to enforce our way, through firing, socially rejecting, ostracizing, or violence. This happens in academia with those who want to show the evidence for creation and God, and is happening now with any who disagree with a certain social agenda. This is what always happens when views are held that are not based on truth—truth must be suppressed and those bring truth must be attacked. Thus God's prophets were perpetually attacked; Jesus was attacked; the apostles were attacked; the Reformers were attacked; and who is being ostracized, vilified, attacked by mobs today?
- We replace doing—the practical development of abilities—with academic memorization of narratives, histories, worldviews, philosophies and humanistic values
- We replace God's design for relationships, marriage and family, loving other people by seeking their best interest, with all kinds of distortions based on the law of this sinful world—survival of the fittest. And relationships get distorted in which men dominate women, marriage becomes polygamous, slavery occurs, might makes right, power is in arms or wealth, the economy of heaven is replaced with capitalism, communism, socialism all of which operate on imposed law and me-first principles.

Do you see how the public educational systems of this world are completely corrupt, are destructive to our spiritual nature and abilities, and interfere with human beings developing into the full stature that God has designed for us?

My sister sent me this quotation this week from *The Great Controversy*, the context is Jesus distraught over Jerusalem just before His crucifixion:



The Majesty of Heaven in tears! the Son of the infinite God troubled in spirit, bowed down with anguish! The scene filled all Heaven with wonder. That scene reveals to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin; **it shows how hard a task it is, even for infinite power, to save the guilty from the consequences of transgressing the law of God.** [What do you hear? Why is it hard? If it is just a legal problem and Jesus was willing to pay the penalty, and all we need to do is accept the legal application and have the judge make a ruling, why is that hard? Because that entire idea is a lie, it is a fraud, it is not true. The real problem is not legal but the actual state of our hearts and minds operating out of harmony with God and His design law for life. It is hard to get people to choose God, to reject the lies they love, to reject fear and selfishness and choose to trust Jesus and be transformed in heart. To reject the methods of this world in seeking justice and apply the methods of God. I see how hard it is every day. Look around and you will see those who refuse truth and prefer the way of the world.] **Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem.** The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; **the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God,** the foundation of his government in Heaven and earth. [The great sin of the Christian world, not the agnostic or atheistic world, or communist world, or the Buddhist or Hindu world, but of the Christian world. Consider the meaning. Do we have Christians around the world teaching lawlessness—i.e. there is no law of God, sin doesn't exist, no one will face judgment, God will not punish, or do we have the entire Christian world teaching that all have sinned, and sin is transgression of the law, and we are in legal trouble, and God is required by His holy law to inflict punishment upon lawbreakers? So, understand what this author is saying, that God's design law would be rejected by Christianity, not that they would teach there is no law, but that Christians would accept a replacement to God's law. They would replace God's law with human imposed law and to do so is actually lawless. This is what has happened.] **The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught. Millions in bondage to sin, slaves of Satan, doomed to suffer the second death,** would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation. Terrible blindness! strange infatuation! (pp 22) [Why are they doomed to suffer the second death? Because having accepted the lie about God's law, that it is imposed rules, they have accepted a false diagnosis—that we are in legal trouble. Having accepted a false diagnosis they have created many false legal solutions to the sin problem, but those theological constructs all based on human law fail to actually heal the heart and mind and renew the character. Thus millions remain in the bondage of sin, fear, selfishness, abusing their spouses, or children, yet claiming legal payment for their sins.]

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "Though we don't think of a garden..." There are multiple benefits from being in nature that would enhance learning, less anxiety or stress, better cognitive performance, and real-world experiences.



- A study of 498 Japanese individuals evaluated the impact of walking in the forest versus a routine day. The study found hostility ($P < 0.001$) and depression ($P < 0.001$) scores decreased significantly, and liveliness ($P = 0.001$) scores increased significantly on the forest day compared with the control day. (Morita, E. et al., Psychological effects of forest environments on healthy adults: Shinrin-yoku (forest-air bathing, walking) as a possible method of stress reduction, *Public Health*, Volume 121, Issue 1, 54 – 63).
- Great Britain has over 100 schools that operate in outdoor forest settings. Observation of students from these schools noted improvements in the children's confidence, motivation and concentration, language and communication and physical skills. (O'Brien, L., Learning outdoors: the Forest School approach, *Education 3-13*, Vol. 37, Iss. 1, 2009, Pages 45-60. O'Brien, L., Forest School and its impact on young children: Case studies in Britain. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, Vol 6, Iss 4, November 2007, Pages 249–265).

Read second paragraph, “God made man and woman...” Why did God give Adam and Eve work to do?

Because it is only by application of one's abilities that a person develops. Useful labor is beneficial for us. The benefits include:

- Improved self-esteem, from actual accomplishment and achievement.
- Better physical health, from increased physical activity and the reduced firing stress pathways as we experience satisfaction with completing tasks, or fulfilling our life goals, aspirations, and dreams.
- Development of our brain circuits that control physical movement, which in turn improves our thinking and reasoning.
- Benefits those around us: as we engage in useful activity our activities will result in blessings in our environment—whether we are creating works of art, or music to brighten the heart, or are mopping, vacuuming, picking up trash to create clean environments, or growing food. All useful activity blesses those around us.
- Reduces burdens on others: by staying active we reduce the likelihood of our own disability and the need for others to care for us.
- Harmonizes with law of love, which is the principle of giving; and the more we give the more we receive
- In the world of sin, working reduces opportunity for temptation, and this is perhaps one of the greatest benefits of useful work today and thus helps us develop mature character

So useful labor operates upon the laws of exertion and love. If you wanted to injure people, to undermine their development, to cause them to be less capable—what action might you take?

Which group would be most likely to develop to their highest potential:

- Those who have liberty, freedom, and equal opportunity but have to work for everything they get, no freebies, no handouts



- Those who also have liberty, freedom, and equal opportunity but everything necessary to live is given to them, monthly stipend, free housing, food vouchers, whether they achieve or don't achieve they will always have a place to live, clothes to wear, food to eat.

It is a violation of God's design to give everything to people and never require them to exert themselves, never place them where they have to work, to apply their energies, to grapple to overcome and achieve.

In the third paragraph the lesson points out that God wants humans to be happy. From where does happiness arise?

As I have said previously happiness is the byproduct of healthiness in all domains – physical, mental, emotional, relational, and spiritual. When we are physically ill, we are not happy; mental or emotional illness – not happy; relationship conflict – not happy; spiritual sickness (guilt, shame, condemnation) – not happy.

Just this week I came across a quote from Viktor Frankl—Austrian Neurologist, Psychiatrist and Holocaust Survivor:

Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself.

Many people who are unhappy, because they are unhealthy spiritually and psychologically, substitute pleasure seeking for happiness and most pleasure seeking violates the laws of health in some way and thus they only get worse.

Happiness is the byproduct of healthiness in all domains, and healthiness is experienced only when we are in harmony with **God's design laws for life** – the protocols upon which the Creator God has built reality to operate. When we break the laws of health, sickness, disease, and suffering occur – thus undermining our happiness. This is why the Bible repeatedly tells us, "Happy are those who keep God's law!" (Proverbs 29:18 GNT).

While we cannot choose to "be happy" or seek to directly obtain happiness, we can choose to be healthy, choosing to live in harmony with all aspects of God's design laws for life. And as we choose healthiness, the byproduct is ever increasing happiness.

Over the last several decades a lot of research into happiness has occurred. And what do you think the research shows?

- In one 6-week study the researchers had participants randomized into a control group and two active groups. One group was to "count your blessings" once a week on Sunday, the other active group was to "count your blessings" 3 times per week Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. This was done by making lists of things they were thankful for.



- Those who counted their blessings once a week had improvement in gratitude and happiness
 - Both the controls and those who counted their blessings three times per week had reductions in both gratitude and happiness
 - Once a week caused actual thankfulness and appreciation, three times a week caused a desensitization where the list making became rote, a chore, proforma, routine and perhaps even a burden. (Lyubomirsky, S et al, Pursuing happiness, the architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*. 2005;9(2)111-131).
- In a different 4-week study they had a control group and two study groups, one group was to do acts of kindness for others, the other study group was to do acts of kindness for self. At the end of the study, and at a later follow up.
 - Those who did acts of kindness for others were happier than the control group, but those who did acts of kindness for self were no different from the control group. (Nelson, SK et al., *Emotions*. 2016;16(6):850-861).
 - In another 4-week study researchers wanted to see if acts of kindness did more than just bring an emotional state of happiness. Are there physical benefits to acts of kindness. They had four groups—controls, those who were to do acts of kindness for others, those who were to do acts of kindness for the world—like picking up trash along the road, and those who did acts of kindness for self. Then they examined gene expression in WBC's to see if there was a difference in immunity.
 - Those who did acts of kindness for others had reduced inflammation and improved viral fighting ability when compared to controls. In other words, gene expression changed, epigenetically, based on acts of kindness toward others.
 - But those who did acts of kindness toward the world or for self, did not differ from controls. (Nelson-Coffey, SK, et al., *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. 2017;81:8-13).
 - Researchers found that acts of kindness or happiness interventions could backfire in some situations and make a person less happy;
 - When the motivation is self-focused, doing acts of kindness so others will like you more, or you will get advancement, or praise etc.
 - When it becomes a burden, rote, work, rather than actual love
 - When it contradicts one's heart, beliefs, or current mindset
 - Such as a person who is in clinical depression making a thankful list—this can actually cause the person to feel guilt, feel like a burden to others as they think about how much others have done for them
 - Cultural contradictions—like in some Eastern cultures to give thanks to parents for a good job in raising their children is viewed as an insult as if they wouldn't have fulfilled their duty to their family
 - Actions that go against a person's baseline personality, such as an introverted person being directed to give thanks in front of a group



- What the research has thus far demonstrated is that the greatest action one can take that consistently brings increased happiness is acts of kindness for others.

MONDAY

Near the bottom of the lesson we read, “In Genesis 3:1-6, examine the description the serpent used and that Eve repeated. What do you notice about the information that the serpent offers Eve? What do you notice about how Eve then regards the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil?”

This is from the NIV:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”

4 “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

What do you notice from this exchange? What did the serpent do? What lies or distortions did the serpent introduce?

What is meant by the claim “you will not surely die?” What is implied? Is the serpent saying there is nothing actually harmful about eating the fruit?

If the serpent is saying there isn’t anything harmful in eating the fruit, yet God has said if you eat of it you will die, then if the fruit won’t kill them, what is the unsaid implication?

This is where Satan introduces the idea of God’s law being imposed—there is nothing inherently wrong with eating the fruit, so you can eat it and not die, God may use power to kill you, but the act of eating the fruit itself is not harmful. This is the subtle lie woven into the temptation.

But there is another tactic of Satan seen here that is being used widely in society today—he globalizes. He takes a minor or narrow restriction or issue and makes it appear like it is a total issue. “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from **any** tree in the garden’?”



“You can’t eat anything in this place—all the trees are off limits. God is restrictive”—globalization.

Do we see this being done today to incite people to rebel against love, to turn against their neighbors, to attack their communities?

What about the narrative of white police officers shooting black men being a global, society wide problem leading to hostility, violence and calls for police departments to be defunded? This narrative is a lie, not all the trees in the garden are off limits, not all the millions of righteous and honest police officers are hunting down black men.

But there is a globalization, a distortion of reality, taking a narrow point and making it sound like it is globalized as a free-for-all killing spree of a system that targets blacks. Do we want the truth?

Candace Owen, a black American woman, granddaughter of a sharecropper, writes in her newly released book: *Blackout: How Black America Can Make Its Second Escape From the Democrat Plantation*:

The narrative that black me are routinely discriminated against and slaughtered by white police officers has become a dominate theme across mainstream media, inspiring protests, boycotts, and clashes with police officers. Across social media, footage of black men dying at the hands of white police officers has received hundreds of millions of views, garnering an emotional response from many who have decided that police brutality is a problem that needs to be solved. Of course, virtually no American would stand in support of something has horrific as police brutality, but the truth is, the issue of blacks being murdered at will by vigilante police officers is but a dishonest distortion, blown out of proportion by the liberal media’s foundational need to highlight the suffering of the black community—whether real or imagined.

In an op-ed published by the City Journal on September 25, 2017, writer and attorney Heather Mac Donald used indisputable numbers to dispel the narrative that killing of black men by white cops was such a frequent, senseless occurrence that all black mothers ought to keep their sons locked up in their rooms... ‘Contrary to the Black Lives Matter narrative, the police have more to fear from black males than black males have to fear from police,’ Mac Donald wrote. ‘In 2015, a police officer was 18.5 times more likely to be killed by a black male than an unarmed black male was to be killed by a police officer.’ ...

The FBI’s 2018 data on homicides clearly shows that blacks do not need to be protected from white police officers—they need to be protected from themselves. of the 2,925 blacks who were killed in 2018, 2600 of their murderers were other blacks; only 234 were white. I need not point out the fact that even if those 234 white-on-black homicides were all committed by cops (they were not), blacks are still 11 times more likely to be killed by someone within their own community.” pp 167-171.



She goes on to document that research shows that the most relevant variable that increases the likelihood of being shot by police is not race, but the amount of crime in the county in which one lives. If you live in a county in which a lot of white people are committing crimes then white people are more likely to be shot, but if you live in a county in which a lot of black people are committing crimes then black people are more likely to be shot. Police shootings have nothing to do with race and everything to do with crime.

Why do I present these data in a Bible study? Because we are examining the methods of Satan—how he distorts reality and deceives. How he takes a minor narrow issue and tries to globalize it in order to incite fear, resentment, and rebellion.

Satan is described in the Bible as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. When the lion roars it incites fear. When you see all these messages inciting fear in our society today, causing people to pull back, to isolate, to stop ministering to each other, to attack others who don't live by their fear-based restrictions, do you see the roaring lion?

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, “Though she [Eve]...” The Bible says Eve was deceived—was it about not taking God seriously, or about believing a lie?

And how would you describe the lie that she believed? Was it merely about the dangers of the fruit, or about the trustworthiness of God?

This is where the devil really tricked her. In demonstrating the fruit wasn't harmful he got her focusing on the fruit and diverted her mind away from what really mattered—this trick works today on so many. This issue was not about the fruit, it was about who she trusted.

Life, health, happiness all have their source in God. The key was not a piece of fruit, but their love/trust relationship with God. Satan was using the Tree of Knowledge to introduce doubt about God, not to get her to eat a poisonous fruit.

- Lies believed break the circle of love and trust
- Broken love and trust result in fear and selfishness (survival of the fittest)
- Fear and selfishness result in acts of sin
- Acts of sin damage mind, body, relationships a terminal condition

Here are a couple of historic quotes, demonstrating what I am teaching has been understood for years and is part of historic Adventism.

Eve believed the words of Satan, and the belief of that falsehood in regard to God's character, changed the condition and character of both herself and husband. They were changed from good and obedient children into transgressors..{RH, January 5, 1886 par. 8}



Now consider this quote:

Through belief in Satan's misrepresentation of God, man's character and destiny were changed, but if men will believe in the Word of God, they will be transformed in mind and character, and fitted for eternal life {1SM 346.1}

Jesus said the truth will set us free—truth from what? Lies about God. The truth about God's character of love is the final message of mercy, this is the 3 angels' messages, this is our mission.

- Truth believed destroys lies and restores trust
- In trust we open the heart and love casts out fear
- Love and trust leads to acts of righteousness, service, altruism
- Acts of righteousness results in maturing of character and witnessing the kingdom of God

But it all starts with the truth about God—as long as we cling to the penal legal lies about God the healing plan is obstructed!

What do you understand the purpose of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil to be?

What do you take from the name of this tree?

Do you see it is a tree of reality—it is the place where Adam and Eve would decide what they would know.

This is life eternal that they might **know** you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent John 17:3

This knowledge of Good and Evil, wasn't theoretical knowledge, it wasn't cognitive knowledge. God and the angels had already informed Adam and Eve about Satan, about evil, about death being result of sin.

Adam and Eve had information, factual knowledge. That is not what the Tree was about—it was about experience, knowing by experience Good or Evil, by the choice to trust and believe God, or to believe lies and disbelieve God thereby breaking trust with Him.

God tells them, at this tree you will have knowledge—choose well, choose not to partake of the fruit and you will know Good—you will know love, trust, loyalty, devotion, maturity, integrity, joy, peace, and godliness all of this will solidify in your character. But if you choose to partake the fruit, you will know fear, selfishness, insecurity, guilt, shame, distrust, pain, suffering and death—you will know evil.

God already knew evil—not in His character, but in His heart as His heavenly home had been fractured and He was already suffering the heartache of betrayal, disaffection, being lied about and the loss of His most loved angel.



God did not want humankind to know this kind of pain, suffering, heartache. He wanted humankind to know only good, but this required them to choose to trust God and choose the good in order for them to know it.

One of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; **but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automation. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character.** . . . It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. {CC 13.3}

WEDNESDAY

Read third paragraph, “The good news is...” What has Jesus done for us? How would you describe it? And how is what Jesus has done for us to be connected to education?

Do we alter the education we provide when we teach the plan of salvation (what Jesus has done for us) through the imposed law view, when we teach a penal legal salvation?

THURSDAY

The lesson focuses on those who despise authority. What do you understand authority to be?

What is the difference between the authority wielded by humans and the authority wielded by God?

What kind of law do the two systems operate upon?

Does our understanding of law impact our understanding of authority?

Do we view authority like the authority of a:

- referee
- umpire
- official
- judge
- magistrate

What gives the people in these offices authority? The rules of the various organizations—and ultimately the consent of those upon whom the authority is visited.

In other words, human authority arises out of the consent of the governed—we must go along.



But God's authority rests in truth—in reality itself and thus it is authoritative even for those who refuse to accept it. It is the authority of design law.

The lesson asks us to read 2Peter 2. This particular passage is grossly misunderstood and in my view seriously mistranslated through the lens of imposed law in most translations. I will read it from *The Remedy*:

¹In the past, among God's people were those who claimed to speak for God and bring his Remedy, but they did not speak for God at all, and they brought a false remedy. Likewise, there will be people among you who claim to teach God's truth and have God's Remedy but will teach lies. They will subtly introduce false remedies — destructive doctrines purported to heal but actually incite fear, shut down thinking, and damage the mind. They will even deny the Sovereign Lord who procured the Remedy, thus bringing rapid deterioration and destruction upon themselves.²There will be large numbers of people who embrace their corrupt ways while calling themselves Christians, thus causing the Remedy to be considered worthless.³In their eagerness for power, fame and wealth, these false teachers will mislead you with theories and doctrines they have made up on their own. Because of this, their terminal condition only worsens, and their ultimate destruction is unavoidable.

⁴For God did not suspend reality to let the angels avoid the consequences of their deviation from his design for life, but he expelled them from his presence, suspending them in utter darkness for the day they reap the full result of unremedied sin.⁵God did not allow the gangrenous ancient world to completely cut itself off from him but brought the flood to excise the necrosis and save Noah—a teacher of the Remedy—and seven others.⁶He diagnosed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as beyond healing, and in mercy, he cauterized those festering lesions to ash, making it clear that the unhealed will not be made to suffer eternally, but the torment of sin will mercifully be ended;⁷and God delivered Lot—a man who partook of the Remedy and was tormented by the disgusting lives of those living in violation of God's design—⁸for it was torture for that man with a healed mind and sensitive heart to live day after day among such vileness and see and hear such vulgarity.⁹If God can do all of this, he also knows how to rescue from affliction the godly — those who have partaken of the Remedy — while preserving until the day everyone is accurately diagnosed, the ungodly — those who by refusing the Remedy suffer in persistent sin,¹⁰and especially those whose minds are controlled by selfishness and who are so self-centered that they despise any authority, oversight, or redirection. They are presumptuous, pompous and arrogant; they are so self-absorbed that they have no respect for heavenly beings, but instead, they denigrate them.¹¹Yet even angels, who are mightier and stronger than these false teachers, do not slander such beings in the presence of God—the source of all truth.¹²These people speak foolishly about things they don't even comprehend; they are like unthinking animals, driven by fear, rage, and lust. They are caught up in their own destructive choices, and — like the unthinking beasts — they will also perish.

¹³They will reap what they have sown, receiving as their wages the harmful results of living outside God's design. Their idea of health and happiness is to violate trust, stay faithful to no



one, and openly indulge the basest passions. They are festering lesions of decay, reveling in their orgies.¹⁴They constantly backstab, betray and exploit; they never stop violating God's design for life — the law of love — and instead, constantly promote selfishness. They seduce the immature and unstable; they are experts in taking for themselves, regardless of how it hurts others. They are unhealed, dying under the curse of sin;¹⁵they have chosen to leave the design protocols for life and have embraced the methods of Balaam, son of Beor, who loved the rewards procured by exploiting others.¹⁶But a donkey had more sense than Balaam and told him he was wrong. With the voice of a man, the donkey spoke and stopped the prophet's insane action.

¹⁷These people have nothing to offer; they are like dried-up springs, having no more substance than a vapor trail in the sky. Eternal darkness is what awaits them.¹⁸They proclaim a false message, empty of any healing power but appealing to the selfish human desire to advance self. They entice people who are only just escaping the dog-eat-dog world.¹⁹They promise freedom from fear and selfishness but are themselves slaves to their own insecurities, lusts and depraved natures — for a person is a slave to whatever controls them.²⁰If they have broken free from the corruption of the world by experiencing a genuine intimacy with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ but choose to entangle themselves again in the web of selfishness, lust and deceit, they are worse than they were before they knew the freedom in Christ.²¹They would suffer less if they had never experienced the joy and freedom of righteousness than to have known it and turned back into slavery and pain, ignoring God's design—the sacred protocols that were passed on to them.²²Their characters prove true the proverbs: "A dog swallows its own vomit," and "You can clean a pig, but it will return to wallowing in the mud."

FRIDAY

read and discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Thank you to all of our supporters!!! We appreciate your prayers and financial support.

BLOGS are a Resource: Remember if you have a question about some Bible issue, go to our website and use the search engine with key words and check out the results. We receive many emails asking questions, and often we can reply by sharing the link to our blogs.

July 1, we launched our SHARING campaign. The first of every month we will be making available FREE resources for you to share in your community, with family, friends, pastors, church members. These resources will be free and shipped free to US addresses only and while supplies last. So follow us on Facebook and watch the first of each month as a new resource is made available. **September 1-30, while supplies last, *The Aging Brain: Proven Steps to Prevent Dementia and Sharpen Your Mind.* BE SURE TO USE OUR WEBSITE STORE TO PLACE YOUR ORDER—DON'T SEND AN EMAIL.**

Saturday, October 3, 2020! Come and Reason will be presenting a live in-person event at the Chattanooga Convention Center in Chattanooga TN! **Healing the Mind and Transforming the Character in a Broken World** is one-day event and will be packed with presentations by Timothy R. Jennings, Katie McPherson, Ben Bost and Kent Delhousaye. Join us to learn principles and strategies to heal the mind and heart from fear and habits that overrun our lives You'll want to book your spot soon before the event is sold out-- lunch is included in this great price! Click [here](#) for more information.

October 10: We will have two classes doing lesson 3 & 4: We will start class at 9:25 and go to 10:25 and then restart at 10:35 to 11:35

The Book of Genesis has now been added to our website Remedy and will be added to the app soon.

The Remedy App, which is free, is Updated, and now includes the Psalms! Please go to your app store and update The Remedy.

Multi-Languages: Check out our multi-language section, it is growing every month. **There are now 30 blogs translated into Polish as well as *Could It Be This Simple?* all available on our website—thank you Mirra Huber!**

PODCAST: Come and Reason with Dr. Tim Jennings weekly Podcast is now broadcasting, please follow us.

The Journal of the Watcher Video is available for FREE streaming at comeandreason.com

Power of Love Training and Equipping Course is now available online at comeandreason.com All presentations are available video and also in MP3, the power point slides are available with and



without the Come and Reason Branding logos and the Syllabus, with its reference guide and study questions is available for download. We encourage you to use this material in small group Bible studies or use the slides and present the series at your church.

November 6-7, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>